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ABSTRACT

Results of a statewide survey of public libraries in California conducted in September 1978, to gather information about the impact of Proposition 13, the Jarvis-Gann Tax Limitation Initiative, on library services are summarized. Data from the 141 libraries which responded to the survey are organized in groups of comparative statistics, juxtaposing figures for fiscal year 1977-78 with those for 1978-79 (the former are actual while the latter are estimates or approved budget figures). Public libraries are classified by type of jurisdiction--city, county on property tax, county on general fund, combination city-county, and district--and statistics for operating income (by sources), expenditures, hours of operation, and staffing are provided. Significant reduction in almost all areas is the basic finding. (JD)

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December 1, 1978

Statewide Summary

Special Survey of California Public Libraries, September 1978

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Introduction

When the electorate passed Proposition 13, the Jarvis-Gann Tax Limitation Initiative, on June 6, 1978, they, no doubt unwittingly, wrought havoc upon the state's public library service.

Public library finance in California has been based largely upon local taxes on real property. Proposition 13 brought a 62% reduction in this income. In a prompt and laudable response to Proposition 13, the Governor and the Legislature distributed some $4 billion of state surplus funds to hard-hit local governments. Very little of this found its way to local public libraries. Only 8% of public library income for Fiscal Year 1978-79 is from state sources, while 9% is from federal sources. The federal contribution is 42% revenue sharing, 36% PWEA, 16% CETA, and 6% other programs. Statewide, total public library income for operating purposes this year stands at 83% of last year, and 11% of that comes from reserves, carryover and prior year taxes.

In July and August, libraries closed down branches and bookmobiles, cut hours of opening, laid off staff temporarily or permanently, and halted the purchase of new books and other materials. The 1978-79 state relief funding enabled restoration of some of that. Library service is notably cut back this year for 18 million of the state's population, served by 113 public libraries. For four and a half million served by 28 libraries it stands at less than 70% of last year's level.

The citizens of California now have 10,877 fewer hours weekly of public library service available to them, a 22% reduction, and will have to be satisfied with a 20% reduction in funds for new materials, back to the 1975 level in a time of soaring inflation in book prices. With this has come a 21% reduction in staffing (full-time equivalent), and an actual loss of jobs through lay off for 1,228 public library employees. Interlibrary loan activity among the state's libraries declined by 50%, and special programming for children and adults and outreach visits to hospitals and shut-ins were decreased or eliminated in many libraries.

The data presented here are the summary results of a statewide survey of public libraries in September, 1978, co-sponsored by the California State Library and the California Library Association, to gather information about the effects of Proposition 13 on library services, especially to provide information to the Commission on Government Reform (the Post Commission) and other concerned bodies. Figures for Fiscal Year 1977-78 are actual, while those for 1978-79 are estimates or approved budget figures.

Thanks are due to the 141 libraries who took time from their hectic days to complete the survey. Thanks also to Clarence Walters, Contra Costa County Librarian and chairman of CLA's Government Relations Committee, to Assistant State Librarian Nancy Percy, and to Cy Silver, Chief of the Library Development Services Bureau, California State Library, for their help in developing and guiding the survey.

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Page 1: Proposition 13 impact

Total library operating income, percentage for 1978-79 of 1977-78 level, by number of libraries reporting and population served.

Public libraries statewide, by type of jurisdiction: total 171	Less than 70%	70% to 85%	86% to 100%	Over 100%
City libraries (80 of 106 reporting)	13 libs. 701,570 pop.	20 libs. 1,632,735 pop.	31 libs. 5,741,800 pop.	16 libs. 1,332,840 pop.
County libraries on property tax (31 of 33 reporting)	10 libs. 3,611,235 pop.	10 libs. 2,853,420 pop.	6 libs. 1,114,620 pop.	5 libs. 1,219,755 pop.
County libraries on general fund (10 of 11 reporting)	-0-	1 lib. 46,700 pop.	3 libs. 65,500 pop.	6 libs. 277,510 pop.
Combination city-county libraries (8 of 8 reporting)	1 lib. 85,300 pop.	5 libs. 1,317,195 pop.	2 libs. 616,510 pop.	-0-
District libraries (12 of 13 reporting)	4 libs. 157,800 pop.	3 libs. 85,950 pop.	4 libs. 81,000 pop.	1 lib.[1] 16,750 pop.
State total (141 of 171 reporting)	28 libs. 4,555,905 pop.	39 libs. 5,936,000 pop.	46 libs. 7,619,430 pop.	28 libs. 2,846,855 pop.

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Page 2: Operating income

Public libraries statewide, by type of jurisdiction	Property tax, secured		Property tax, unsecured & state reimbursement		Reserves, carryover, prior year taxes		General fund, other	
	1977-78	1978-79	1977-78	1978-79	1977-78	1978-79	1977-78	1978-79
City libraries	34,698,226	16,514,394	2,474,638	1,149,976	1,919,991	3,044,442	44,646,057	53,263,053
County libraries on property tax	60,252,362	27,512,397	9,990,731	5,630,491	8,358,339	12,481,943	3,773,815	3,588,471
County libraries on general fund	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	7,353	23,912	2,270,979	2,195,226
Combination city-county libraries	9,922,167	5,152,803	1,385,339	410,559	1,262,035	1,873,824	4,738,412	5,557,639
District libraries	4,378,812	1,874,328	692,679	169,120	1,451,613	1,527,158	226,423	186,670
State total	109,251,567	51,053,922	14,543,387	7,360,146	12,999,331	18,951,279	55,655,686	64,791,059

Public libraries statewide, by type of jurisdiction	Subtotal, all local income		Subtotal, all state income		Subtotal, all federal income		Total operating income, all sources	
	1977-78	1978-79	1977-78	1978-79	1977-78	1978-79	1977-78	1978-79
City libraries	84,038,141	74,581,678	16,327	1,084,325	12,545,496	11,476,524	96,599,964	87,142,527
County libraries on property tax	82,375,256	49,252,392	6,909	10,580,477[2]	1,450,955	3,627,597[4]	83,833,120	63,460,466
County libraries on general fund	2,278,377	2,219,138	-0-	3,200	77,912	157,154	2,356,289	2,379,492
Combination city-county libraries	17,289,952	13,020,534	-0-	1,287,022	248,858	181,608	17,538,810	14,489,164
District libraries	6,747,000	3,758,526	-0-	565,432	50,000	43,600	6,797,000	4,367,558
State total	192,728,726	142,832,268	23,236	13,520,456[3]	14,373,221	15,486,483	207,125,183	171,839,207

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Page 3: Expenditure, hours, staffing

Public libraries statewide, by type of jurisdiction	Library materials: books, periodicals, microform, audiovisual 1977-78	1978-79	Total operating expenditure 1977-78	1978-79	Hours open per week, main library only 1977-78	1978-79	Total hours open per week, all service outlets 1977-78	1978-79
City libraries	13,027,204	12,434,646	88,910,033	83,753,164	5,037	4,324	18,057	14,414
County libraries on property tax	10,640,149	6,637,369	76,307,666	62,835,920	1,638	1,225	22,878	17,421
County libraries on general fund	336,965	391,237	2,263,936	2,326,776	619	586	1,775	1,685
Combination city-county libraries	2,465,607	1,777,872	15,711,169	13,746,000	535	403	4,706	3,407
District libraries	731,375	484,885	5,124,230	3,859,686	746	509	1,041	653
State total	27,201,300	21,726,009	188,317,034	166,521,546	8,575	7,047	48,457	37,580

Public libraries statewide, by type of jurisdiction	Total staff FTE 1977-78	Total staff FTE 1978-79	Change	Count of persons laid off (not FTE) 1978-79
City libraries	4,372.34	3,709.73	-662.61	396
County libraries on property tax	3,509.61	2,631.68	-877.93	434
County libraries on general fund	153.03	137.07	-15.96	6
Combination city-county libraries	743.85	541.18	-202.67	288
District libraries	281.08	134.78	-146.3	104
State total	9,059.91	7,154.44	-1,905.47	1,228

Notes:

1. Del Norte County District Library is newly formed and not typical of other district libraries. It anticipates most income from timber yield tax.

2. Includes amounts libraries anticipate receiving as additional state relief: Marin Co.(unspecified); Santa Clara Co. ($1,329,587).

3. Los Angeles Co. anticipates possible additional state income of $11,904,366, not included in totals, of which $2,424,000 is for materials.

4. Main increase is revenue sharing and PWEA.